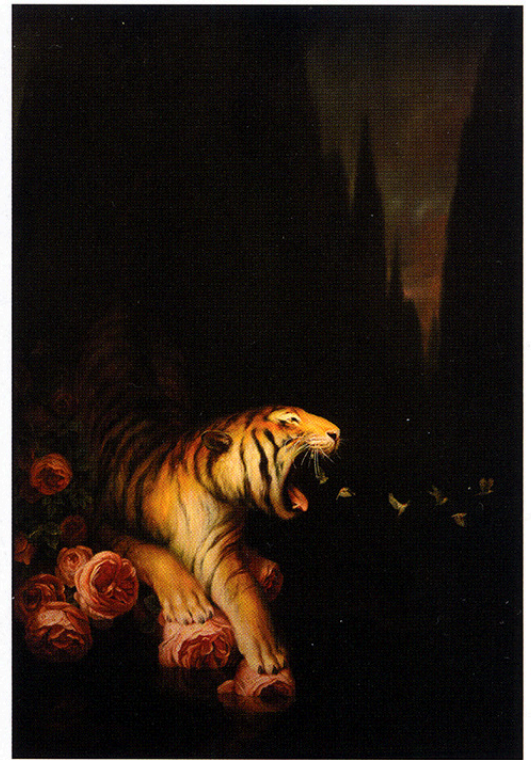




Guy Combes (b. 1971)
Rothschild's Reprise
 2012, Oil on canvas, 18 x 24 in.
 Rehs Contemporary Galleries, New York City



Martin Wittfooth (b. 1981)
Nocturne
 2013, Oil on linen, 72 x 48 in.
 Collection of the artist

In 1994 this museum moved to a spectacular new building on a butte overlooking the National Elk Refuge, and in 2008 Congress designated it a national museum. Today it holds more than 5,000 works made by artists ranging from Audubon to Warhol. Supervising this trove is curator Adam Duncan Harris, Ph.D., who has published widely and authored the definitive catalogue of the NMWA collection, *Wildlife in American Art* (2009). September is an ideal time to visit, thanks to the museum's lively *Western Visions* season of exhibitions, lectures, workshops, parties, and other events.

Another leader is Vermont's Bennington Center for the Arts, founded by the collectors Bruce Laumeister and Elizabeth Small and a regular host of SAA's touring exhibitions since 1994. Last year the Bennington mounted its 17th *Art of the Animal Kingdom* show, and in 2004 Drs. Myron and Karin Yanoff gave it 13 bird carvings by Floyd Scholz (b. 1958). An entire gallery is dedicated to Scholz, who now offers summer workshops at the Bennington for students from around the country. Equally proactive is the Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum in Oradell, New Jersey, just half an hour northwest of New York City. Named after a local conservationist and collector, the museum is particularly respected for its artist-in-residence program, currently held by Aaron Yount.

In Wausau, Wisconsin, the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum is best known for organizing *Birds in Art*, an annual juried exhibition that draws submissions from around the world. The current edition is on view March 9-May 5 at the Newington-Cropsey Foundation (Hastings-on-Hudson, New York); it then moves to the Frank H. McClung Museum at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (May 25-August 18) and finally Texas's Rockport Center for the Arts (September 14-November 16). The next edition of *Birds in Art* is set to open on September 7

and will also tour. Finally, in the scenic wine country near Santa Barbara, California, is the Wildling Art Museum, founded by the artist Patti Jacquemain in 1997 as a venue for collecting and exhibiting wildlife art.

As for art depicting domesticated animals, a key leader is the National Sporting Library & Museum in Middleburg, Virginia, founded in 1954 and devoted to horse and field sports, including angling. In addition to highlights from its rich permanent collection, the galleries are now showing exhibitions about the great painters Bob Kuhn (through March 30) and Abbott Henderson Thayer (through May 26). In St. Louis, the American Kennel Club's Museum of the Dog holds a large collection and mounts intriguing art exhibitions throughout the year.

The success of these specialty museums has not been lost on more generalist institutions, which is perhaps one reason Pennsylvania's Allentown Art Museum is planning an innovative exhibition based on David Wagner's *American Wildlife Art* book. Set to run September 29-December 31, this project will feature approximately 75 paintings, sculptures, and drawings dating back to the 17th century and right up to such contemporary talents as Robert Bateman and Kent Ullberg.

More focused is the exhibition *Lure of the Ocean: The Art of Stanley Meltzoff*, on view through June 2 at the Bruce Museum in Greenwich, Connecticut, which organized it in cooperation with the J. Russell Jinishian Gallery nearby. A legend in the world of animal art, Meltzoff (1917-2006) was the first artist to realistically portray marlins, bluefish, striped bass, and other major game fish species in their natural habitats. This project features approximately 30 oil paintings, many of them three to four feet long, complemented by specimens of fish, turtles, shells, and corals from the Bruce's own collection. On view at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco this year are several